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1920

Rhymes of the Wild & Woolly

By PHIL LeNOIR



The Hangin' O' Wampus Pete.

Down On the Ol' Bar-G.

The Fingerof Billy the Kid.

My Name is Charley Siringo.

Helltown's First Sky-Pilot.

Ol' Dynamite.

Killer Keller.

The Puncher Poet.

Eventide in Cowboyland.

Bogged.

—And Others.

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Humble apologies are due a certain New Mexico Sheriff for using in one of the "pomes" an incident of his official life, and to a w. k. southwestern cowboy bard for versifying one of his "musing" experiences.

Here also I render my sincere thanks to those kindly critics, especially A. Y. W. who encouraged the appearance of these rhymes on the printed page.

—P. L.

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DOWN ON THE OL' BAR-G.

The boss he took a trip to France,
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.
An' left his gal to run the ranch,
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.
She wouldn't let us chew nor cuss,
Had to keep slicked up like a city bus,
So round-up time was u-nan-i-muss—
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.

Our round-up cook, he soon got th'u,
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.
Found his clay pipe right in the stew,
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.
But when we let that feller go
We married grief an' we married woe,
For the gal opined *she'd* bake the dough,
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.

Wisht you'd seen her openin' meal
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.
We all blinked twict—seemed plumb unreal,
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.
Thar was figs an' fudge and whipped-up pru-in
An' angel cake all dipped in goo-in,
“My Gawd” said Tex, “My stomick's ruint”—
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.

We quit that job an' cook-ladee,
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.
An' pulled our freight for the lone prairie,
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.
For out on the range we could chew an' cuss,
An' git real mean and bois-ter-uss,
Whar apron-strings they couldn't rope us.
 Down on the ol' Bar-G.

THE PUNCHER POET.

Jest *onct*, I was a temper'mental, sentimental poet.
Grew a mane like Colonel Cody's fur to show it.

I'd write pomes in my dreams

Then I'd sing 'em to the teams.

Yup!

A sentimenal, ornamental poet.

Wrote a pome *onct* about ol' Bloody Bill,
Told about the many humans he had killed,
Took him through his entire life,
Showed his love and showed his strife,
Then I hung up like a lunger on a hill.

I was near the happy ending of my tale,
Had ol' Billy ketched an' in the county jail.
When them words plum petered out,
Wouldn't flow, wouldn't spout.
Then I roared an' hit the temper'mental trail.

I went to pawin' an' a-clawin' fur them words,
Skeered the wife an' sent her roostin' with the birds,
But they wouldn't come alive
Though I raved till half-past five,
Then I quit the house an' joined the loco herd.

Now I only hear one temper'mental call—
It's the rumble of the cattle's organ-bawl,
As fur the little tale
Bloody Bill is still in jail,
Which was a damn good place to leave him a'ter all.

THE HANGIN' O' WAMPUS PETE.

Ol' Wampus Pete was a hell-raisin' gent,
He spit lead bullets everywhar he went,
He chawed shoe-leather instid o' raw stake
When he didn't have a human for a meal to make.

But one day Pete ketched religion right,
Told Sheriff Colt he'd seen the light,
Said he'd give hisse'f up without bloodshed.
Pervidin' they'd hang him the way *he* said.

Pete's program called fer a big celebration
With a swell parade and a grand oration
Which he said he'd preach at the ob-see-kees
On the sin-ful-ness of out-law-ree.

The Sheriff replied: "All right Ol' Pete",
An' declared a holiday in Mesquite,
Invited all the folks to witness the lark
Of the outlaw hangin' at Cottonwood Park.

The biggest turnout what's ever been seen
Was present that day at the festive scene,
Thar was games an' speeches an' a barbecue,
Till the Sheriff announced that the hangin' was due.

The rope was tied to a Cottonwood limb,
Beneath was a box with cheese-cloth trimmed,
To the box was attached a big long wire
To be pulled from Pete by little Grace Dyer.

Then Pete stood up on the decorated box
An' preached a sermon on his many hard knocks,
Told the crowd that his life was a powerful lesson
Not to 'dopt outlawin' as a payin' perfession.

Quick the Sheriff slipped an' old gunny-sack
O'er the outlaw's head an' noosed the slack,
Then the crowd roard out "three cheers for Pete"
As the box was jerked from beneath his feet.

Way down in Mesquite on the Tombstone line
On a mon-u-ment these words you'll find:
"Here lies Wampus Pete, the hell-raisin' gent,—
His future won't be so vi-o-lent."

OL' DYNAMITE.

The outlaw stands with blindfold eyes,
His feet set wide apart;
His coal-black hide gleams in the sun—
Thar's killin' in his heart.

A puncher squats upon his heels,
His saddle at his side;
He's sizin' up Ol' Dynamite,
Which he is booked to ride.

The cowboy rises, lifts his saddle—
A little tune he's hummin'—
Walks catlike all around the hoss—
“Hold him, boys, I'm comin'.”

Now up above the outlaw's back
He lifts the load o' leather;
Then care-ful-lee he lets it down,
Like the droppin' of a feather.

Ol' Dynamite he stands stock still,
Plumb like a gentled pony.
A leap, a yell! an' Bucks all set—
“On with the cer-e-mo-nee.”

The snubbers rip the blindfold off,
The punchers yip and yell.
Ol' Dynamite gives one grand snort,
Then starts his little Hell.

He plunges forward on his feet,
His hind heels in the air.
Then up an' down he bucks an' backs
Like a loco rockin' chair.

But now he stops—he spins around—
He bawls, he bites, he kicks!
He rares straight up into the air,
Then down on two steel sticks.

But look! “My Gawd!” the crowd screams out,
“He’s boltin’ for the stand!”
Then just as quick he jerks up short—
An’ thar’s Buck a-sticking grand.

Buck leaps to earth, lifts high his hat,
Bows to the whirl of cheers—
Then turning slides his saddle off,
An’ quickly disappears.

THE FINGER OF BILLY THE KID.

Oh, that finger of Billy the Kid,
What a heap o' harm it did.
But when Billy died the finger died too
An' was buried beneath the mornin' dew
No more to pull his six-gun true,
The finger of Billy the Kid.

But one day up Chicago way
I heerd a sideshow feller say:
"Jes' step this way an' fer a dime you'll see
The trigger-finger of Kid Bill-ee
What has pulled a hundred massacrees,—
The finger of Billy the Kid."

Wall I knew that feller he lied like a snake
An' that his finger was a fake—
But I paid my dime to see the show
For I was a frien' of Billy's I'll have you know—
He did me a favor in New Mexico,
The outlaw, Billy the Kid.

I follered the crowd into the hall,
Saw the finger perserved in alkyhall,
Then I pulled my gun so none could tell,
An' I blowed that *thing* clar into hell,
An' gave a yip an' a mighty yell:
"Hurrah for Billy the Kid!"

Of course they thew me into jail
From whar a letter I did mail
To Sheriff Pat Garret who killed the Kid
An' I told him what I'd gone an' did
An' to tell me quick if he'd got rid
Of the finger of Billy the Kid.

Wall Ol' Pat came back quick an' hot
An' in a few words he said a lot:
"The trigger-finger of young Bill-ee
Is still upon his dead bod-ee,
I know, because I dug to see
The finger of Billy the Kid."

If Billy kin hear from his "dobe shack"
I reckon he knows I've paid him back
Fer the favor he did me when my voice was stilled
By thirst an' hunger, an' my body he filled
With buffalo meat that had been killed
By the finger of Billy the Kid.

WHEN THE SHERIFF FROM THE EAST MET THE SHERIFF FROM THE WEST.

The Sheriff from the West straightened out his fancy vest,
Flecked a hair from off his hundred dollar tweeds;
For the Sheriff from the West was a devil on the dress
An' a-gassin' on his many darin' deeds.

But the Sheriff from the East wasn't carin' in the least
To be flashin' any optic-knockin' rags;
He wore a battered beaver hat an' a rig that went with that—
Looked the pitcher of an outlaw on the crags.

Now the Sheriff from the East while a-huntin' in the West
Came upon a sickly hoss that needed slayin';
Phoned the Sheriff from the East: "Come an' kill the suf-
ferin' beast,"
To the Sheriff from the wild an' wooly plains.

So the Sheriff from the West jerked down his purple vest,
Put a polish on his silver-mounted star;
Then he hopped his limousine for the sad an' dyin' scene,
All a-shinin' like a Philadelphia bar.

When the Sheriff from the East saw the Sheriff from the
West,
He thought the Czar of Rooshia had revived.
Then he took him to the spot on the mesa bare and hot
Whar the puny hoss had gone an' nearly died.

When the Sheriff from the West saw the hoss, he did his best
For to keep his blinkin' eyes with tears a-fillin'.
"Why its good ol' Funeral Wagon, the hoss I uster ride on
When I pulled my daily desperado killin'."

“Why for years that hellish hoss never owned a human boss,
Oh, the heads an’ laigs of punchers he did brake.
I’m the only man alive ever rode him an’ survived.
What a pair of human-killers we did make.”

Now while the Sheriff from the West was a-gassin’ from
his chest,
You should have seen that dyin’ cayuse all a-mused;
First he winked at Sheriff East, then he grinned, the crazy
beast,
Like Ol’ Sheriff West was shorely spoutin’ *news*.

Then the Sheriff from the West pulled his gun from out his
vest,
Aimed it hard upon ol’ Funeral Wagon’s head.
The hoss he heaved a sigh; Oh, well! ’twas grand to die
With a record like the Sheriff said he hed.

Then the Sheriff from the West on his silver trigger pressed,
An’ a roar into the silent mesa put.
But Ye Horney Toads a-tootin’! an’ Ye Shades o’ Western
shootin’!—
He had missed ol’ Funeral Wagon by a foot.

Quick ol’ Funeral hit the skies, kicked the clouds in Sheriff
eyes,
Went a-wingin’ to the distant mountain crest.
“I’m all Hell tied in a Hide; I’m the Nag with Mars astride,
If you doubt it, ask the Sheriff from the West.”

That pore Sheriff from the West did his damdest to express
The why-ashun of that air-disturbin’ shot,
While the Sheriff from the East, not a word could he re-
lease,—
He was throwed an’ tied in-to a laffin’ knot.

EVENTIDE IN COWBOYLAND.

Wall, thar's the cowboy at his fire
A-settin' lone an' han'some!
He's rode all day with the bawlin' steers,
An' he's rarin' for to dream some.

Ol' Sol has made his last grand bow
Behind them silvery crowns.
His sunset show has jest been pulled,
An' the purple curtain's down.

The puncher boy lifts up his eyes,
A smile his face is warmin',
Fur he seems to see in the mountain mists
Familiar figgers formin'.

Perhaps 'tis a flash of Round-up Park
Whar he rode, for first prize money,
That spinning, sinning, killin' cuss—
That homicidal pony.

Then agin, fur you jest kaint never tell,
A mother's gentle face,
Or a dear ol' pal—or a back-home gal,
Who beckon from the space.

But now the purple picture fades,
The filmy faces pass.
A chill descends upon the range—
The day has breathed its last.

The puncher sighs—gets to his feet,
Kicks out the fire with sand;
A yee-awn, a stree-etch—the blanket roll—
Then: "So long, Cowboyland."

The moon looks down on the cattle horde
 An' the cowboy's tawny head;
The star eyes blink at the valley's edge,
 While the night-winds softly tread.

A pony snorts—a heifer bawls,
 But the sleeper never hears—
He has hit the hay, an' the slumberous way
 To the land whar low no steers.

BOGGED.

Low-hung clouds o'er a gray-grassed range,
And a night mist slowly falling;
A struggling calf in a quicksand bog
Sending out its piteous bawling.

*Quick a wolfish form streaked from nowhere,
Cocked up its ears and sniffed the air,
Then step by step on velvet paws
It crept and crept and licked its jaws.*

But the whimpering cries of the mud-caught calf
Soon sank with the sinking sun;
A storm-born hush crept o'er the range,
And the night-birds had begun——

*When the air was lashed with the tongues of hell,
Of maniacal screams and yapps and yells;
Of voices that wailed and whined and wept—
Then sharptly stopt—!!
As step by step on velvet paws,
The coyote crept,—
Then crept, and crept, and crept, and crept,
And licked his slobbering jaws.*

*MY NAME IS CHARLEY SIRINGO.

To be sung from the "hurricane deck" of a galloping cowpony.

Rider slows up at end of each verse.

My name is Charley Siringo,—ringo, ringo.
Of my cowboy days I sing-O, sing-O, sing—
Oh I've rode the range since "65"
An' a hundred brones without a dive,
It's a wonder I am still alive.
Yup!

The name is Charley Siringo, ringo—Whoa!

I sing of Charley Siringo, ringo, ringo,
I'm shore a lucky gringo, gringo, gring—
Oh, an hombre took a shot at me,
He missed my heart an' hit my knee
Which made me hop with glee.
Seguro! It's Charley Siringo—gringo—Whoa!

My handle's Charley Siringo, gringo, sing-O,
Of detectives I'm the King-O, King-O, King—
Oh the killers I have trailed an' jailed—
To land my man I never failed,
I had Nick Carter plumb out-tailed,
You bet! the handle's Siringo, King-O,—Whoa!

Oh, the gals knew Charley Siringo, gringo, King-O,
I could sling the lovers' lingo, lingo, ling—
O I slung it at an Injin fair,
It ketched an' she began to rar,
I married her,—*all but a hair.*

Yee-yip! the name is Charley Siringo, gringo, ringo
Sing-O, lingo, ringo, King-O—Whoaaa thar—

[“Bingo”!]

* With apologies to Chas. A. Siringo, New Mexico's famous
cowboy—author—detective.

HELLTOWN'S FIRST SKY PILOT.

They called it Helltown, an' it was,
With roarin' red-eyed ways;
Jest ten months old, but in that time
Had growed like a prairie blaze.

An' yet is was a healthy town,
It owned no pains nor ills:
The nearest doc was miles away—
(Beneath the daffodils.)

But the coroner was a different tale,
He never kep' his seat;
Was busy as a centipede
With a spell o' itchy feet.

He was holdin' inquests twict a day,
Had Boot Hill brimmin' full,
With fellers who had stopped a ball
From out a six-gun pulled.

So thets jest why the cits they craved
A preacher pilot keen
To steer the boys thet bit the dust
To heavenly pastures green.

Wall, a meetin' was called at Rat-Eye's place
To discuss the burnin' question;
All Helltown came to see an' add
Their personal suggestions.

Then Mayor Blood said, "I tell you gents,
Our name we'll soon besmirch
If we 'low a hundred halls of hell
An' don't allow a church.

“An’ besides, way up on ol’ Boot Hill
Is ninety some odd men
What was planted thar without a word
Of human recommend.

“So what we need, my feller men,
To make us wear a crown,
Is a chantin’, plantin’ preacher man”—
An’ then the mayor sat down.

Wall about that time a stranger stood up,
Said in town he jest had drift—
Was a preacher-gent an’ qualified
To give the boys a lift.

So they hired the parson on the spot
An’ to pay him did agree
A hundred per fur Boot Hill plants
An’ fur others twict the fee.

Then a bunch of Helltown’s citizens
Was appinted to conspire
With the preacher in his services
As the offishul singin’ choir.

There was Roarin’ Sid, an’ Coyote Kid,
An’ Hydrophoby Mike,
An’ Whiskey Pete, an’ Lizard Feet,
An’ Annanias Ike.

The choir it had jest one lone tune,
“In the Sweet Bye-and-Bye”
Which it sang for saint or sinner man
Or Jew or Gentile guy.

An’ sing? Wall say, they sounded like
A herd o’ sick trombones
All mixed an’ crossed with coyote yelp
An’ a few oneearthly moans.

But let me state thar wasn't a sound
While the boys they musicfied.
To have grinned or funned at such a time
Would a-meant plumb suicide.

Now you might be thinkin' we're all through,
But we hain't by two more verse,
For while our parson's trade had growed
His fortunes had growed worse.

Thar dropped in Helltown one dark night
A sheriff from across the state.
He was trailin' down a killer-man
By the name of "Deacon" Waite.

Of course you've guessed the tragedee,
Our parson was the meat,
An' he left that night for the "Bye-an'-Bye,—
Which makes our tale complete.

A DAY IN DESERTLAND.

A lizard streaked up the side of a rock,
 With a road-runner in pursuit;
A kangaroo-rat watched from below,
 'Till a rattlesnake made him scoot.

The kangaroo-rat leaped for his hole,
 But the rattler's aim was good;
A horny toad grimly laughed at the sight,
 While a Gila monster cooed.

Quick the horny toad flashed into a bush,
 But alas! left out his tail;
A prairie-dog stopped a moment to weep
 And a coyote mimicked a wail.

That prairie-dog he "shore" did move,
 But the coyote he moved faster;
A scorpion stung a centipede
 As it went strolling past her.

* * * * *

The road-runner dozed in his cactus-corral,
 The rattler slept as if dead;
The Gila monster groaned and moaned—
 "No more horn-toads," he said.

But the coyote yipped in his gormand glee,
 As he stalked another dog;
While the scorpion munched its wriggly lunch
 Beneath a petrified log.

* * * * *

A blood-red ball slips o'er yon rim,
 And the night-breeze cools the sand:
Another day—a typical day—
 Has passed in Desertland.

KILLER KELLER.

Killer Keller was a feller whose hide an' soul was branded
yeller,
He'd knife a widder for her purse,
Abuse a hoss or rob a hearse.—
But Killer Keller wanted Eller, which makes us speak of
Billy Weller.

Billy Weller was a feller, white as Keller he was yeller,
Foreman of the Mustang ranch,
Loved to work, or fight, or dance.
Also loved a gal did Weller, which makes us speak of little
Eller.

Now little Eller hated Keller, an' jest as strong loved Billy
Weller.
She was the belle of Cactus town,
With her cherry-cheeks and eyes of brown,
Jest the pard for Billy Weller, was happy, wholesome little
Eller.

But one day Keller he warned Weller to keep away from
little Eller,
Said he'd bore him th'u the hide
If he ketched him at her side.—
The fire it danced in the eyes of Weller as he burned these
words on Killer Keller:

“The next time I go courtin' Eller, I'll send you word,
Miss-terr Keller,
An' it'll problee be at Huggin's Park
Whar you'll find us fannin' Cupid's spark.”—
Keller showed his molars yeller as he turned away a-cursin'
Weller.

Now Billy Weller was a heller playin' jokes upon a feller,
He rigged up swell two dummy figgers
To look like him and Eller Biggers,
Then an invite sent to Killer Keller to watch him spoonin'
little Eller.

Ol' Killer Keller roared an' bellered, when he got that word
from Billy Weller
Hopped his hoss fer Huggin's Park
Arrivin' thar about at dark,
An' saw the figger of fair Eller a-cuddled close to Billy
Weller.

Then Keller drawed his six-gun yellin' an' aimed it on the
back of Weller,—
A shot!—a yell from little Eller,
"I've killed the gal," cursed Killer Keller.
Then singed the wind did Killer Keller, no more to pester
Bill an' Eller.

SIESTA TIME.

A mud-brown hut on a mesa bare,
A burro dozing near,
The blue shades drawn, the door ajar—
Siesta time is here.

Blazing sun—shimmering heat;
The burro wags his ear.
All silent as the distant hills—
Siesta time is here.

Oh, rushing world! Oh, world so tired!
Your lot would seem less drear
If every day you'd steal away
When siesta time draws near.

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